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Roman and Byzantine Campaigns in Atropatene

By V. MINORSKY

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ONE of the arduous problems of ancient geography is the location of the furthest points in Atropatene (Azarbayjān) which were reached by Antonius in 36 B.C., by the Byzantine allies of Khusrau II in A.D. 591 and by the Emperor Heraclius in A.D. 624-7.

Major H. C. (later Sir Henry) Rawlinson studied this question in his well-known "Memoir on the Site of the Atropatenian Ecbatana", *JRGS*, 1840, x, pp. 65-158. At the time of its composition the author was only thirty years old and was leading the strenuous life of a soldier, yet his performance is remarkable not only for his mature judgment and clear vision of local topography, but also for a truly amazing array of classical and oriental evidence. Rawlinson's main thesis of the existence of a second Ecbatana was soon challenged,¹ but for a long time his analysis of the campaigns and the importance he attaches to the site of Takht-i Sulaymān have been considered to be conclusive. It was only when ancient authors appeared in more reliable editions, and more Arabic and Persian texts were published, that doubts were expressed on single points of Rawlinson's demonstration,² though many eminent scholars dared not challenge Rawlinson's final identifications.³

No attempt has yet been made to revise the whole problem studied by Rawlinson, but the evidence which we now have at our disposal renders untenable his basic thesis (p. 113), namely "that the various names of Phraata, Praaspa, Vera, Gaza, and Gazaca . . . refer to one and the same city," which he further (p. 114) locates at Takht-i Sulaymān.

The sources on Gazaca, the fire-temple, etc., have been systematically

¹ Quatremère, *Mémoire sur la ville d'Ecbatane*, in *Mem. de l'Ac. des Inscr.*, 1851, xix/1, pp. 419-456.

² Kiepert, *Atlas Antiquus*: Ganzak at Leylān. Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Sasaniden*, 1879, p. 100: "Ueberhaupt enthält diese Abhandlung Rawlinsons bei aller Verdienstlichkeit sehr viel verfehletes." Herzfeld, *Arch. Mitt.*, II/2, 1930, p. 72, places the temple at 6 fars. from Maragha "in Richtung Zinjān" [?]. Marquart, *A Catalogue of the provincial capitals*, 1931, 109 (Ganzak = Laylān).

³ G. Hoffmann, *Auszüge aus d. syrischen Akten*, 1880, p. 252; Fabricius, *Theophanes von Mytilene*, Strassburg, 1898, p. 228 (the author winds up by surrendering his lucid arguments to the authority of the "Orientalists"); Marquart, *Ērānsāhr*, p. 108 (but see corrections in his later *A Catalogue*, p. 109); A. Pernice, *L'Imperatore Eraclio*, Florence, 1905, p. 125, still found "le ragioni del Rawlinson convincentissime"; P. Schwarz, *Iran im Mittelalter*, viii, 1932, pp. 1099, 1454; Sir A. Stein, *Old routes in Western Iran*, 1940, p. 341 (with some hesitation).

surveyed several times,¹ and this enables us to concentrate on the more important issues while trying “to raise fresh crops by turning over old soil”.

As Byzantine records are by far the most abundant and explicit, it will be a considerable advantage to deal first with them, and only afterwards with Antonius' campaign.

§ 1. *Byzantine Expedition Against Bahrām Chūbīn*

The detailed western source on this expedition is Theophylactus Simocatta, ed. Bonn, pp. 204–238, who lived under the Emperor Heraclius (610–40) and recorded the events of the reign of Mauricius (582–602). He must have followed the report of one of the participants of the campaign who was outspoken about certain Persian blunders and not satisfied with the way in which Khusrau II treated his auxiliaries.

In the seventh year of the reign of Mauricius (A.D. 589), Khusrau II, threatened by the revolt of Bahrām Chūbīn, sought refuge with the Byzantines. At his request the Emperor bade his general, Narses, accompany him with a Greek contingent of troops.² Simultaneously Khusrau's maternal uncle Bindōē was to invade Persia from the north-west with the help of John, the prefect of Armenia. The stages of Khusrau and Narses have been analysed by Rawlinson, pp. 71–8, and Hoffmann, p. 217. Coming from Mardīn and Dārā the allies crossed the Tigris at *Διαβαδών* (Rawlinson places it “near the ruins of Nimrod”) and then the Great Zab. On the fourth day the expedition reached Alexandria (R.: “Arbela”). One day more brought them to the region called *Κλίμα Χναιθός* (Syr. *Ḥnāithā*). The name is mentioned in Heraclius's campaign as *Χαμαθηθᾶ* (Theophanes, ed. de Boor, 317). It certainly began north of Arbīl (possibly in the valley of Bastura), although the extent of the bishopric *Ḥnāithā* is still uncertain (Hoffmann, 216–222).³

As Bahrām had received the report that the commander of the right wing of John's force was trying to cross the (Greater) Zab, he captured the bridge lower down. Then Narses directed his colleague Rufinus to occupy the other passages (*διαβάσεις*). After this Narses unexpectedly invaded the country of Aniseni (*τὴν τῶν Ἀνισσηνῶν χώραν*). As the allies were already on the eastern bank of the Zab the desire of Narses must have been to secure his rear, with the exception of the bridge already occupied by the enemy. As it appears, John did not succeed in his plan to break through along the course of the Zab (or alternately along the line Van-Mervan-en-‘Amādiā?), and the junction took place only to the east of the Zagros.

The identity of Aniseni is still obscure, but Rawlinson's equation Aniseni

¹ See Rawlinson, *passim*; Hoffmann, *Index*; W. Fabricius, pp. 227–231; Weissbach, *Gazaca* in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Lexicon*; A. V. W. Jackson, *Persia Past and Present*, pp. 124–143; Mary Crane in *Bull. Amer. Inst. Iran. Art.*, December, 1937, pp. 84–9.

² According to Muralt, this happened in A.D. 591.

³ I feel pretty certain that the Kurdish tribe called in Arabic *Ḥumaidī* is connected with *Ḥnāithā*, just as the Hadhbāni Kurds have been surnamed after Hedhayeb (Adiabene).

= Azoni merits some attention.¹ Pliny, vi, 118 (ed. Detlefsen, 1904, 154) has : Gurdiaëis [Corduene] vero iuncti Azoni, per quos Zerbis [Zab] fluvius in Tigrim cadit, Azonis Silices montani [cf. the village Sidakan, east of Revanduz] et Orontes [cf. Revānduz], quorum ad occidentem oppidum Gaugamela [Arbela ?], item Suae in rupibus. In any case, Aniseni should be looked for in the direction of Revānduz.

When the advance of the main force was reported to Bahrām, he sent his troops northwards and eastwards to check John's progress towards the main body of Narses. In the course of this manoeuvre he reached "a certain lake" (*εἰς τινα παρακειμένην λίμνην*), which could only be Lake Urmia. John must have been advancing then from the direction of Urmia, and his force was separated by this expanse of water (i.e. by its south-western tip) from Bahrām, who apparently was somewhere near Sulduz.

John continued his march southward (towards the valley of Gādir), whereas Narses and Khusrau, having pushed forward from the Anisenian country, reached a village locally known as Siraganon (*καὶ γίνονται πλησίον κώμης τινὸς ἣν Σιραγανῶν οἱ ἐγγχώριοι κατονομάζουσι*). *Rawlinson ingeniously identified this point with the present-day Qal'a Singān² lying in the valley, of Ushnū, to the east of the pass. Here the armies operated their junction and Bahrām, impressed by the array of his enemies, took the road of the highlands (*εἰς ὄρους ἀνάβασιν ἀνετέτραπτο*), i.e. probably of the hilly country south of Sauch-bulaq. Khusrau, on his own responsibility, pursued Bahrām, but was repelled by the latter. Nevertheless Bahrām was frightened by the Byzantines' ardour, and moved his camp aside (*ἐκκλίνει*) into a difficult area inaccessible to cavalry (Central Kurtak massif separating the Kialū from the Tatavū). The Byzantines passed into the near-by plain [*sic*] in which stood the (fortified) city Kanzakon. Bahrām also, from where he was, moved his forces in order to weary the Byzantines. The latter by forced marches followed and came close up to him. Then they advanced to the river Balarath (*ποταμῷ τῷ Βαλαράθῳ*, var. *Βλαράθῳ*) and in the morning went forth into an open field. Here the battle took place in which Bahrām was defeated. A special body of 10,000 Byzantines was detached to pursue him. For three days the Byzantines and Khusrau remained near the battlefield,³ but on the fourth day were forced by the stench of the corpses to move near Kanzakon. Thence the Byzantine corps took leave of Khusrau.

The eastern counterpart to Theophylactus is in Ṭabarī and Firdausī. The

¹ Doubtful. Marquart, *Südarmerien*, 1930, p. 337, identifies Zerbis with Bohtān-su, and places the Azoni near Arzūn (in the neighbourhood of Se'ert). Instead of *Azoni*, one MS. has *Aloni*, which name may be represented by that of the district *Alān* (in the gorge of the Lesser Zab).

² More doubtful is his further identification of it with *Σίνκαρ*, which, following Ptolemy's co-ordinates, lay considerably further east (27.2 miles east of *Δαριάσσα* = Daryāz on the Sauch-bulaq river).

³ "In the enemy's territory" *ἀνὰ τὸν πολέμιον χῶρον*. The text suggests that the victors were collecting the booty. "The stench" also is a certain hint at the nearness of the battlefield.

evidence has been examined by Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Sasaniden*, 285, and Hoffmann, op. cit., 248. Ṭabarī, I/2, 1000, names the place of the last battle دوه, apparently *D.n.q*, and Firdausī, ed. Mohl, vii, 140, 142, 150, describes the arrival of Khusrau as follows: "The Shāh put up his royal tent in the plain of Dūk, (his) army being so numerous and his way the true path."

Sarāparda zad shāh bar Dasht-i Dūk
Sipāhī chunān gashn-u rāhī sulūk

In a further passage, vii, 150, Firdausī also mentions a mountain of the same name کوه دولک ("spindle-mountain") from which Khusrau watched the battle. The Arabic word *sulūk* supports the rhyme *Dūk*, and in fact *Dnq* may have been misread from **Dwk* of the Middle Persian original, the sign for *n* and *w* being identical. We should not easily surrender the reading *Dūk*; but in Arabic script *k* and *l* are very often confused, and the question arises whether by some accident *Dūk* (دولک) has not been mis-spelt in later writers as *Dül* (دول). In fact *Dül* is known in the toponymy of the south-eastern corner of Lake Urmia.

The *Rāhat al-ṣudūr*, 244, refers to a relay *Dül* situated at one (?) stage distance from Tabriz (*marḥala-yi Dül ba-yak manzīl-yi Tabrīz*), where the Seljuk Sultān Mas'ūd spent two months in the early summer of 544/1149. According to the *Nuzhat al-qulūb* (written in A.D. 1340), p. 87, one of the six districts of Marāgha is Gāvdül through which (p. 223 var. دره کادوان) the River Murd (now Mürdichay) flows to the Jaghatū [*sic*]. The *Ālam-ārā*, pp. 573-5, has a long passage on the events at Diz-i Gāvdül-i Marāgha (or Qal'a-yi Gāvdül) whence Shāh 'Abbās marched to the meadow (*chaman, öläng*) of Qara-chibuq¹ to inspect the royal studs. The Qara-chabuq [*sic*] Turks are referred to in the *Sharaf-nāma*, p. 288, and even to-day some settlements bearing the name of this tribe appear on the maps between Bināb and Malik-kendi. The number of spellings with *l* is somewhat against the graphic confusion of *k* and *l*, but only a close inquiry on the spot into the remains of older toponymy can settle the question.

Whatever the name, the battlefield should be sought in the neighbourhood of Mürdi-chay. Contrary to Mustaufī, the latter is an independent river, but it flows north of, and parallel to, Leylān-chay, which joins the Jaghatū. As several reasons are in favour of the identification of Ganzak with Leylān, the plain between Leylān and Mürdi-chay suits the position of the battlefield as described by Theophylactus. The mountain *Dūk* (Firdausi) might be identified with Mandil-sar, through the gorge of which Mürdi-chay forces its way into the plain.

A third independent source is the Armenian historian Sebēos (a contemporary of Khusrau), who places the battlefield in the canton Vararat (tr. by Macler, p. 19).

¹ Possibly the Miyān-du-āb, the strip of territory between the rivers Jaghatu and Tatavu with its excellent grazing grounds. Even now it is occupied by the royal studs.

Neither Theophanes nor Sebēos contains any reference to the celebrated fire-temple of Shīz of which Arab authors give so many accounts.¹ The main feature of the campaign is the river τῶν Βαλαράθω, a name without any doubt identical with Armenian Vararat. In his account of the Mesopotamian campaign of Heraclius, Theophanes, ed. de Boor, p. 321, refers to the river Βαρασρώθ, corresponding to the present-day Beled-rūz. The old name is clearly Iranian *Barāz-rōd, "Wild boar river." As Greek -ρωθ = rōd, we should expect the same element in the name of the river Βαλαραθ; but both the Greek and the Armenian forms end in -ραθ/-rāt. It is not impossible that in foreign mouths some simplification ("haplology") has been applied to the original name, which may have been *Vararān-rōdh (Varahrān being the older form of Bahrām; cf. Byzantine Οὐαραράνης, Agathias (d. in A.D. 582), ii, 24).²

This hypothesis is corroborated by Mas'ūdī, who three times connects the names الشيز والران. He says (*Murūj*, ii, 131) that Afrāsiyāb was killed بلاد الشيز والران which Hoffmann successfully restored as *الشيز والران; that the Arshakids (ii, 235) were kings of الشيز والران; and that (iv, 74) in the same country (بلاد الشيز والران) stood a famous fire-temple; "in it were idols, but Anūshirvān removed them from it; it is also reported that Anūshirvān came upon that fire-temple in which there was a great fire, and he transferred it to the place known as *al-Birka* ('pond, tank')." Later generations naturally read *al-Shīz wa al-Rān*, and in fact Firdausī locates the refuge-place of Afrāsiyāb near Barda', in Transcaucasia (namely, in the province of Ar-rān, Armenian Aḷvank^h, Greek Ἀλβανία). But the fire-temple could not be simultaneously in two such entirely different places as Arrān and Shīz (in the south-eastern corner of Lake Urmia). Hoffmann quite rightly connected والران (*Vālarān) with Armenian *Vararat*, thus clearing the path to the solution of the vexed question which forms the subject of the present study.³ The final *n* of *Vālarān supports our restoration of the name of the river (**Vararān*).

There is another mutilated text which seems to settle the question. In the remarkable biography of the Nestorian patriarch Yabalāhā, edited by Bedjan and translated into French by Mgr. J. B. Chabot, it is reported (tr. p. 119) that in A.D. 1296-7 the patriarch travelled to Marāgha and thence proceeded to the Royal camp *via* Shāqātu (i.e. river Jaghatū) and Siyāh-kūh. In 1304-5 the patriarch joined the il-khan Öljeitü "on the bank of the river

¹ On Firdausī, *vide infra*, p. 255.

² In this connection one might remember (1) that the River Sārūq, which is the south-eastern affluent of the Jaghatū, might have been taken for the chief head-water of the latter river, (2) that in the neighbourhood of the southern bank of the Sārūq are situated the famous caves of Kerefto bearing a Greek dedication to Heracles (see now Sir A. Stein, 324-346), and (3) that Heracles is the Greek equivalent of the Iranian Vərətraghna > Varahrān > Varārān.

³ To the six *nāhiya* of Marāgha the *Nuzhat al-qulūb* adds two dependencies (*tavābi'*): انكوران ولاوران. The latter might correspond to *Valārān*, but it has numerous variants قول اوران مرال داوران etc., which would suggest **Qizil-uzan*.

called in Mongolian *Jaghatuy* and in Persian *Vakyarud*". From Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Quatremère, 102-3, 411, 417, we know that the banks of the Jaghatū were favourite winter quarters (*qishlaq*) of the Mongols. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, the Persian name of the river was Zarīna-rūd, "Golden river", but the anonymous Christian writer seems to have preserved a more ancient geographical term. Vakyarūd (?) (𐭪𐭥𐭥𐭥) means nothing in Persian, and the mutilated name should probably read *𐭪𐭥𐭥𐭥 *Vararōd*, or 𐭪𐭥𐭥𐭥 *Varanrōd*, or even 𐭪𐭥𐭥𐭥 *Valarōd*. In my ignorance of Syriac I consulted on this matter the late Mgr. F. Nau, who (letter of 17th June, 1929) gave his blessing to my restoration. Should it prove acceptable, we shall have one firm point: Βαλαραθ = Vararān-rōd = والرآن = Jaghatū, and Kanzakon must be sought in its immediate neighbourhood, *vide infra*, p. 254.

§ 2. Campaigns of Heraclius

Both the chronology and the sequence of events in the course of the Emperor Heraclius's three campaigns in Persia (probably in A.D. 621-2, 624-6, and 627-8) present a number of difficult problems.¹ However, single episodes are known to us in considerable detail. For the earlier (A.D. 624-6) campaign in Southern Azarbāyjan we have no authentic report. The panegyrics on Heraclius composed by his contemporary Georgios Pisides contain only a few names submerged in the sea of Byzantine rhetoric. The best later account belongs to Theophanes the Confessor (who completed his work *circa* A.D. 810-15), ed. de Boor, 1885, pp. 309-310. For the final stages of the war (A.D. 627-8) we happily possess an exceptionally important document in Heraclius's own report dated Kanzakon, 15th March, 628. It is found incorporated in *Chronicon Paschale* (compiled *circa* A.D. 629).

The Persian tradition, as recorded in Ṭabarī, Firdausī, etc., overlooks the capture of Ganzak, and Sebēos (trans. Macler, p. 81) says only that Heraclius arrived *via* Karin (Erzerum), Dvin, and Nakhchavan, and "marching on the Gandzak [of Atrpatakan] he overthrew the altars of the Great Fire (*Hrat*) which was called Všnasp". Theophanes does not explain the route which Heraclius followed before arriving at Ganzak, and moreover, the Greek text used by Rawlinson (ed. Bonn, i, 471) is definitely corrupt. It is only in the old Latin translation prepared by the Papal Librarian Anastasius, *circa* A.D. 874-5, that the passage is complete, but as it contains an unfamiliar name the importance of it was long overlooked. Instead of reproducing de Boor's retranslation of the omitted passage into Greek we shall leave the traditional text in Greek and the additional passage in Latin: *καὶ καταλαβὼν ὁ βασιλεὺς τὴν Γαζακῶν πόλιν* in suburbanis hujus reficiebat exercitum suum. Persae vero, qui confugerant ad eum, perhibebant, quod Chosrohes fugiens igne consumpserit omnia sata in locis illis et pervenerit ad civitatem Thebarman ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ, ἐν ἣ ὑπήρχεν ὁ ναὸς τοῦ πυρός καὶ τὰ χρήματα Κροίσου,

¹ E. Gerland, *Die pers. Feldzüge des Kaisers Heracleios*, in *Byz. Zeitschrift*, iii, 1894, pp. 330-373; A. Pernice, *L'Imperatore Eraclio*, Florence, 1905 (compilative).

τῶν Λυδῶν βασιλέως, καὶ ἡ πλάνη τῶν ἀνθρώκων· ταῦτα λαβὼν ἐπὶ τὸ Δασταγέρδ ἐχώρει· ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἀπάρας ἀπὸ Γαζακῶν καταλαμβάνει τὴν Θεβαρμαῖς· καὶ εἰσελθὼν ἐν ταύτῃ πυρὶ ἀνήλωσε τὸν τοῦ πυρὸς ναὸν καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν πόλιν πυρὶ ἀναλώσας κατεδίωκεν ὀπίσω Χοσρόου ἐν τοῖς στενοῖς < τῆς > τῶν Μήδων χώρας, καὶ < ἐν > ταύταις ταῖς δυσχωρίαις τόπον ἐκ τόπου ὁ Χοσρόης ἤμειβεν· καὶ ὁ Ἡράκλειος τοῦτον διώκων πολλὰς πόλεις ἐπόρθησε καὶ χώρας κτλ.

This restored text gives quite a definite picture of the events. Heraclius, having heard that Khusrau was in *Ganzak, marched on the town, took it, and in its suburbs gave a rest to his army. Meanwhile Khusrau moved to the town of Thebarmais, situated towards the east, scorching the land on his way. In Thebarmais [*sic*] was the fire-temple and the treasures of the Lydian king Cræsus¹ and the “charcoal trick”. Having taken these (treasures and fire ?) he moved [south-westwards] towards Dastagerd (near Eski-Baghdad). Now Heraclius seized Thebarmais and burnt the temple and the town. He pursued Khusrau through the fastnesses of Media, but returned to take up his winter quarters in Transcaucasia.

Rawlinson (p. 78), misled by the incomplete text, thought that Heraclius burnt the temple of “Ganzak”. Even such a thorough scholar as Hoffmann (p. 252), who felt that the text was not correct, could not make out why the burning of the temple was recorded not in the important Ganzak, but in the small town of Thebarmais.

The key to the whole problem is given in a report quoted by Mas‘ūdī, iv, 74, according to which Anūshirvān transferred the fire from al-Shīz [wa] *Vālarān to *al-Birka* (“the pond”), which Rawlinson, rather inconsequently but quite rightly, identified with Takht-i Sulaymān.² The Arabic and Persian sources refer to numerous cases when fires were transferred by the Iranian kings, and the striking characteristics of Takht-i Sulaymān gave a sufficient reason for such a move: a powerful ancient fort on an isolated hill, a deep lake on its summit fed by springs, the remarkable scenery of the valley and the situation on the road connecting Central Persian with Southern Azarbayjān, and further with Mesopotamia.

If this removal of the fire had taken place under Anūshirvān (531–579) it becomes clear (1) that neither on his first, nor on his second, visit to Ganzak does Heraclius refer to the presence of a fire-temple in it; (2) that the much less important centre Thebarmais, “lying towards the east,” harboured a great temple.

References to *Θηβαρμαῖς* occur in several other sources, but the name has numerous variants. The earliest notice is contained in fragment 11 of Menander Protector, ed. Dindorf, 1871, p. 25, where the Byzantine ambassador, Peter

¹ This fantastic detail should be compared with Tabarī, I/2, 866, where it is reported that, after his victorious campaign against the Khāqān, Bahrām Gūr presented the jewels of his booty to the fire-temple of Shīz, as he also attached to it the Khāqān’s wife as a maid-servant.

² *Vide infra*, p. 255. The editor of Mas‘ūdī, Barbier de Meynard, brought in a new confusion by declaring that *al-Birka* (which he apparently mistook for *Forg*) was a town in Fars!

Patricius, is said to have visited the king of Persia ἐν τῷ προσαγορευομένῳ Βιθαρμαῖς. As this happened in A.D. 562 under Anūshirvān, Mas'ūdī's statement (see above) receives some indirect corroboration. Theophylactus, v, 14, tells the story how Khusrau II, while he was ἐν τῷ Βεραμαῖς, applied to the patriarch Sergius for prayers that Shīrīn should bear a child. Evagrius, *Hist. Ecclesiastica*, vi, 21 (ed. Bidez, 1898, p. 236) repeats this story, which again indicates that the said place served as residence to the king. Finally Georgius Pisides, ed. Bonn, 1837, p. 85, in his bombastic verse sings the arrival of Heraclius in τῇ Δαραράσει, which town lay "to the north of Persia and to the south (πρὸς Νότον) of us (i.e. the Byzantine Empire)". There Khusrau kept "his Magians and his burning coals". The poet connects the name of the town with Artashīr, the conqueror of the Parthians, but it is obvious that the forms Βιθαρμαῖς Βεραμαῖς Θηβαρμαῖς Δαραρασις represent one single name which we cannot yet restore.

In the *Shāh-nāma*, Mohl, ii, 546-551 (Tehran, iii, 756-762), Kay Kā'ūs, wishing to test Kay Khusrau's valour, sent him against the castle Dizh-i Bahman. The road to it led past the gate of Ardabēl. The castle, which had high walls (*bar-shuda bāra*), was an Ahrimanic creation and was occupied by dīvs. By mentioning the name of God (Yazdān) Kay Khusrau captured Dizh-i Bahman, in which he had a dome built ten lasso-lengths (*kamand*) across, with high vaults. Outside it at half the distance which a horse runs (in a hippodrome?) he placed (the fire) Ādhar-Gushāsp. It is probable that this legend (in its post-Anūshirvānian adaptation) refers to Takht-i Sulaymān, but the connection of the name Dizh-i Bahman with the above-mentioned Byzantine variants is not apparent. If a temple could be dedicated to an Amṛta-spēnta, the variant *Βιθ-Αρμαῖς would suggest Ārmaiti rather than Vohu-manō (> Bahman).

A second time Heraclius arrived in Ganzak on 11th March, 628, and left it on 8th April. His first communication on the events between 17th October, 627, and 15th March, 628 (including the accession of the new king Shērōē) has not come down to us; but the text of his second letter, which was sent from "the camp near Ganzak" on 8th April and read in the churches of Constantinople on 5th May, has survived in *Chronicon Paschale*, Migne, *Patr. Graeca*, xcii, pp. 1017-1022. Heraclius's campaign in Mesopotamia has been examined by Rawlinson, and we are concerned only with the last part of it, when, being threatened by the Persian army recalled from the West (see Pernice, 164), he boldly retreated into Azarbāyjān, behind the Zagros chain. The route followed by him is known in general lines chiefly from Theophanes, ed. de Boor, p. 325.

February, 628, was spent in devastating Shahrazūr (τὸν Σιάζουρον; Chr. Pasch. τοῦ Σιασοῦρων); and in March Heraclius came to "the place called Βάρζαν". Rawlinson identified the latter with Bāna, on the plea that the original Kurdish name of this place is Barōzha ("exposed to the sun, lying eastward"). Consequently in his opinion Heraclius crossed the Zagros (Chr. Pasch. τὸ ὄρος τοῦ Ζάρα) over the Bāna pass. But the name *Barōzha*





VIEW OF TAKHT-I SULAYMAN (p. 251).
Drawn by E. H. Minns from a photo of M. H. W. Schmidt Foundation.

is not known to the old geographers, and the Greeks would hardly have left out a long δ in the middle of the word. It is much more probable that *Βάρζαν* represents the important junction of roads which the old Arab geographers call Barza and which was one of the stages on the road Dīnavar-Marāgha, i.e. at a considerable distance to the east of the Zagros range (*vide infra*). It is quite likely that it should be identified with the present-day Saqqiz, in the upper part of the Jaghatū valley. This conclusion leaves us without a clue as to the pass which Heraclius used. It may have been one of the Bāna passes, but it may have been the pass of Naukhuvān used by the Jāf tribe in its yearly peregrinations from Shahrazūr to the sources of the Jaghatū. As Heraclius states that snow fell all the time from 24th February when he left Shahrazūr down to 30th March, and in the meantime, according to Theophanes, he spent seven days in Barzan, it is more probable that the Byzantine army hastened to reach a point in the warmer Jaghatū valley, instead of the more elevated Bāna separated from the Jaghatū by a pass.¹ From Barzan Heraclius reached Ganzak on 11th March. Thus his march from Shahrazūr lasted seventeen days, out of which a week was spent at Barzan. Ten days' march with an army might have brought Heraclius both to Takht-i Sulaymān and to the lower course of the Jaghatū; but, while the latter even in Mongol times was known as a warm *qishlaq*, the former course, on climatic grounds, is absolutely improbable.

Heraclius in his missive (*κέλευσις*) to Constantinople gives some very important details on Ganzak which were not duly appreciated by Rawlinson. The emperor praises the abundance of provisions for men and horses (*δαπάνας πολλὰς καὶ ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἀλόγων*) found in the city, which had some three thousand houses, to say nothing of the surrounding country. The fortified camp (*τὸ φωσᾶτον ἡμῶν*) was situated in the neighbourhood of the town, but the animals were cared for in the houses "so as to secure a horse to each man in the camp". It is enough to have a look at the excellent new photographs of Takht-i Sulaymān² to recognize that there is no room at Takht-i Sulaymān for such a considerable town.³ The hill rises sharply above the narrow valley surrounded by peaks. Its top, within the powerful walls, has the area of 380 × 320 metres (1,250 × 1,050 ft.), out of which the lake occupies 108 × 68 metres. The rude wintry conditions of the site are illustrated by the photograph taken by the late Professor A. V. W. Jackson, op. cit., 133, which shows Takht-i Sulaymān "buried in snow".

§ 3. Road Dīnavar-Marāgha

The analysis of the Byzantine expedition under Mauricius points to the situation of Ganzak in the neighbourhood of the Valarath (Jaghatū); the

¹ Kele-shīn—to be distinguished from the famous Kele-shin, lying much more north-west between Ushnū and Ravānduz (probably used by the Byzantine troops in A.D. 591).

² *Bull. of the American Inst. for Iranian Art*, December, 1937, pp. 71–105.

³ A. F. Stahl, *Peterm. Mitt.*, 1905, p. 32: "Nichts deutet darauf hin dass hier einst eine grössere Stadt stand."

examination of Heraclius's campaigns confirms the existence of the considerable city of Ganzak, distinct from the Fire-temple of Thebarmais; the Arab sources make quite certain the location of Ganzak.

Of great importance to us is the already quoted route Dīnavar-Marāgha described in three slightly different versions. Ibn Khurdādhbih, 121, and Qudāma, 213, give distances in farsakhs, while Muqaddasī, 383, expresses them in stages (*marḥala*).

	<i>I. Khurd.</i>	<i>Qudāma.</i>	<i>Muqaddasī.</i>
1. Dīnavar	7 fars.	9 fars.	1 marḥala
2. al-Jabārjān	6 „	6 „	1 „
3. Tell-Vān	7 „	7 „	1 „
4. Sīsar		⏟ winter summer	∴
	4	4 ∴	∴
5. Andarāb	5	5 10	1 „
6. al-Baylaqān	6	6 8	1 „
7. BARZA	8	⏟ 8	1 „
8. Sāburkhāst (?)	7	7	1 „
9. Marāgha			

The three authorities quoted describe also a road from Marāgha to Urmia, which first descended southwards to Barza (stages 9., 8b., 8a., and 7.) and thence turned away north-westwards (*vide infra*, p. 253). The first part of this itinerary contains some important details on the road Marāgha-Barza.

	<i>I. Khurd.</i>	<i>Qudāma.</i>	<i>Muqaddasī.</i>
9. Marāgha	6	6	1 marḥala
8b. Janza	5	5	1 „
8a. Mūsā-ābādh	4	4	1 „
7. BARZA	∴	2	1 barid
10. T. flis	8	6	1 marḥala
11. Jābrvān	4	4	2 barids
12. Niriz	14	14	1 (?) marḥala
13. Urmia			

The actual distance between Dīnavar and Marāgha measured on the 1 : 1,000,000 map is *circa* 225 miles. As our detailed list of stages comprises only 50–55 farsakhs, we have to reckon a farsakh at $4\frac{1}{11}$ – $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Before we deal with the lesser points, it will be useful to check the position of the two landmarks Barza and Sīsar, known also from other sources. The distance of 15 f. ($61\frac{4}{11}$ – $67\frac{1}{2}$ m.) to the south of Marāgha would indicate the position of Barza in the region of Būkān-Sarā. As, however, we know that farsakhs were

of a "heavy" type in Azarbayjan,¹ we have reasons to move Barza further south to the important and ancient settlement Saqqiz (20 m. from Būkān, or 10 m. from Sarā). This identification can be controlled by measuring another similar distance (corresponding to 15 f.) south of Barza which would place Sīsar at Senne, as usually accepted (*vide infra*).

The southernmost sector Sīsar-Dīnavar, equal in a straight line to 67-74 miles, is rather too short for the distance of 20-22 f. indicated by I. Khurd and Qudāma. This suggests that on leaving Dīnavar the road followed some devious course, possibly to join the high-road from Kermanshāh to Senne. It is also probable that in the south farsakhs were shorter than in Azarbayjān.

After these preliminary remarks we come to a closer examination of the difficult itinerary, a part of which I covered in 1916, as I was travelling from Kermanshah to Semengān, Dīnavar, Sunghur, and Senne. Most of the names are either uncertain or do not correspond to the present-day toponymy.

1. The ruins of Dīnavar, reduced to shambles by the eagerness of local treasure-seekers, lies near the village Qal'a-jū, 17 miles north of Bīsūtūn.

2. The name الحارحان (Qudāma الجورجان: note the article) may be connected with the tribe *Jabrakān, Gaurakān, Gauragān, later Gūrān.² Two villages called Jabar-abad (?) are shown on the map, one of them lying 18 miles to the west of Dīnavar (in Bilāvar), and the other north of Dīnavar, below the Mēlemās pass. Even if they are not identical with the original Jabārjān, they may have preserved a trace of its name.³

3. The situation of Tell-Vān⁴ is entirely hypothetical. It may have lain at one of the passes leading from the Gāva-rud to the valley of the Senna river (Qishlaq), i.e. possibly near Dargāh, or, if the road swung much further east, at Kargābād.

4. There are good reasons for seeking Sīsar in the neighbourhood of Senne, although the latter capital of the valīs of Ardalān seems to be a late foundation, and there are indications that the earlier centre⁵ lay more to the north, nearer to the sources of the Qizil-uzan (Sefidrūd).

5. Judging by the name, Andarāb lay between two water-courses, possibly the Sefid-rūd and one of its tributaries.

6. Bailaqān (a name occurring elsewhere) should be looked for on the upper Khorkhora.

7. With Barza (Theophanes: Βάρζα) we come to firmer ground. Barza was an important point where the roads to Marāgha and Urmia forked. In the early ninth century A.D. it had a short-lived dynasty of its own, Balādhuri, 331. It is hardly thinkable that travellers from Marāgha had to come all this way southwards to turn off westwards. This procedure would, however, have been natural for a traveller from the south. It is probable that in the original

¹ Under Malik-shāh the length of a farsakh was ascertained to be: 6,000 paces in 'Irāq, Kurdistan, etc., but 10,000 paces in Azarbayjān and Armenia; see *Nuzhat al-Qulūb*, 164 (transl. 161).

² *BSOAS*, XI/1, p. 87.

³ I. Khurd., 121, mentions a stage *Shīz* (without article!) at 4 fars. from Dīnavar, on the road to Sīsar. *V. infra*, p. 264, n. 2.

⁴ The element *vān*, "a place" (Arm. *avan*), is frequent in North-Western Iran: *Jāb.r-vān*, *Bājer-vān*, etc., as probably also *Shīrvān*, *Garzivān*, etc.

⁵ Perhaps identical with the place called in Assyrian sources *Šiṣirtu*; see Minorsky, *Senna* and *Sīsar* in E.I.

itinerary the section Barza-Urmia continued the section Dīnavar-Barza, and only mechanically it was connected with the section Barza-Marāgha (in reversed order: Marāgha-Barza-Urmia).¹ There exists a direct road from Saqqiz to the north-west, and in 1911 I myself travelled straight from Sauch-Bulaq to Saqqiz.² Saqqiz is a very old settlement, as attested by its tall ancient mound.

After Barza the road had two variants. The name of stage 8. is mutilated, and no great credit can be given to the form *Sābur-khāst* ("Shapur has risen"). It must have lain between 8b. Janza and 8a. Mūsā-ābādh. Below we shall speak of this stage in more detail.

The most interesting name of the itinerary is certainly 8b. Janza. In his edition of *Muqaddasī de Goeje*, p. 382, adopted the reading *خره رود*, but the variant *حزه* undoubtedly indicates that the name should be restored as **Janza*, as in I. Khurdadbeh and Qudāma.³ The addition of the word *-rūd* is a proof of the place lying on a river. There is no shadow of doubt that this Janza is the ancient Ganzak. Six farsakhs from Marāgha indicate for it a position at Leylān, lying on a right affluent of the Jaghatū. Thus the Byzantine and Arabic sources are in agreement on the location of Ganzak where Colonel Monteith first placed it in 1832.⁴ He was struck by "the extensive ruins of those solid mounds of earth which characterize all the ancient cities of Persia". In his measurement "the ruins are about 14 miles in circumference and their greatest extent is from east to west". He concludes: "the city of Tabriz appears to be considerably too far north to agree with the position of Ganzaca, which these ruins do; and is situated in the coldest and most barren part of Āzerbijān, consequently little calculated to answer the purpose of winter quarters for so large an army as that of Emperor Heraclius during his second expedition into Persia. They are also near the junction of the three roads leading from Ctesiphon to the capital of Persia, by Senna, Soudj-Bulak, and Burredizi."

Rawlinson, pp. 39, 119, visited the great ruin, which he found to be "a quadrangular inclosure, about three-quarters of a mile in length, and half that distance in breadth, composed of a line of mounds, some 40 or 50 feet in height". He rejected Monteith's identification on the ground that "Gaza is mentioned as the summer residence of the Median kings, but Leilān, in the Miyāndāb plain, is positively one of the very hottest spots in all Āzerbijān". However, this objection is based on the mutilated passage of Strabo which must be checked in the light of the unequivocal statement in Theophylactus about Ganzak lying in the plain, *vide supra*, p. 245.

§ 4. *The Fire-Temple of Shīz*

While Theophylactus makes no mention of the fire-temple in Ganzak, Theophanes definitely affirms that the temple was at Thebarmais. If the

¹ In fact *Muqaddasī*, 382, describes a direct road Marāgha-Shahrazūr making no detour *via* Barza (6 marḥalas *plus* 30 farsakhs).

² See also Sir A. Stein, *op. cit.*, 349-351.

³ See also below, p. 265, Yāqūt's description of Kaznā and Jaznaq.

⁴ *JRGS.*, 1832, pp. 5-6.

later compiler G. Cedrenus (end of the eleventh to beginning of the twelfth century A.D.), ed. Bonn, p. 121, places the temple in Ganzak (τὴν Γαζακὸν πόλιν), it only shows that the important passage, which has survived only in the early Latin translation of Theophanes,¹ was missing in his copy, as it was missing in the early European editions of Theophanes. According to Firdausī, before the battle with Bahrām, Khusrau Parviz rode to the temple and there paid his devotions. The *Shāh-nāma* gives no clue to the position of the sanctuary. As Bahrām's final retreat was in the north-eastern direction (Marāgha-Miyāna ?), he had presumably evacuated the whole area to the south of the battlefield, and thus nothing stood in the way of Khusrau's paying a flying visit even to Takht-i Sulaymān.

The identity of Thebarmais with the present day site of Takht-i Sulaymān results from the evidence of Mis'ar b. Muhallil (first half of the tenth century),² who describes it under the name of *al-Shīz*, and from that of Ḥamdullāh Mustaufi, who refers to the same site under the Mongolian name **Soqurluq*. The importance of both texts has been convincingly demonstrated by Rawlinson, pp. 64 and 70. The Arab traveller has a very doubtful reputation for veracity as regards the lands of the Farther East (the Turks, India), but in Western Persia he must have actually visited several interesting places. Mis'ar gives numerous details on al-Shīz (various mines, unfathomable pond) and the fire-temple, saying that its fire had been burning for 700 years without leaving any ashes. This gives a clue to the mysterious reference of Georgius and Theophanes (cf. also Cedrenus) to the "charcoal trick". It is quite likely too that the presence of a deep lake by the temple was instrumental in the disappearance of the ashes without trace. Mustaufi, *Nuzhat*, 65, says nothing about the temple, but connects the site of Takht-i Sulaymān with the legend of Kay-Khusrau (and Afrāsiyāb), which in its turn is closely attached to the temple of Ādhar-Gushnāsp.

We shall now consider the references to al-Shīz throughout the ages.

The striking site of Takht-i Sulaymān must have ever excited popular imagination, even in Pre-Iranian and Median times. The American expedition found on the spot "a considerable number of fragments of prehistoric painted pottery", but the hill does not seem to have been permanently inhabited. The harsh climate alone fully guarantees this conclusion, and possibly the water of the lake, rich in mineral elements, would not have been to the liking of permanent residents.

¹ Cedrenus uses the same terms as Theophanes in describing the temple, the treasure of Croesus and "the charcoal trick", but he adds a detailed and interesting description of a statue of Chosroes (cf. Mas'ūdī, iv, 74). He may have found it in some other source. In any case his location of the temple in Ganzak has no decisive importance.

² Mis'ar has been known through the quotations found in Yāqūt's *Mu'jam al-buldān*, and in Zakariyā Qazvīnī. Marquart did not live to fulfil his promise (*Festschrift Sachau*, p. 292) to study the problem of the authenticity of what goes by the name of Mis'ar. Meanwhile two *risāla* of Mis'ar's travels have been found in the Mashhad MS. containing also a part of I. Faḡih and an important copy of I. Faḡlān (incomplete).

Marquart explained *Shīz* through the hypothetical Middle-Persian *Šīč* (*Šīčikān*), which many times occurs in Zoroastrian books as the name of a treasure-house. There is still some uncertainty about the reading of the Middle Persian,¹ but Pliny in his geographical compilation mentions among the towns of Media *Phisganzaga* (var. *Fiscanzaga*),² which Marquart restores as **šis* (for *Šīč*)-*canzaga*, corresponding to Middle Persian **Ganj-i Šīčikān*. This restoration would take us up to the beginning of our era; but Marquart goes even further by admitting that *Šīč* may be a Mannæan name. Here, however, we enter the realm of pure speculation. Below, p. 264, we shall consider the possibility of a different derivation of *Shīz* from *Čēcast*. If in Roman times the place (oppidum) was called **Šīč*, or *Shīz*, the Byzantine designations of it (*Βιθαρμαῖς*, *Θηβαρμαῖς*, etc.) are puzzling by their dissimilarity.³

As the American expedition of 1937 definitely established the Parthian origin of the walls and the earliest buildings of Takht-i Sulaymān, it is especially interesting to remember that Mas'ūdī in the *Murūj*, ii, 235, calls the Parthians "kings of al-Shīz (and) **Vālarān*", and in the *Tanbīh*, 95, adds that the Arshakids spent the winter in 'Irāq and the summer in "al-Shīz belonging to Azarbayjān (*min bilād A.*)". The existence of the fort indicates the direction of some important road connecting the central Iranian plateau with the southern basin of Lake Urmia and further with Mesopotamia. In case of need the fort might protect the East against danger coming from the West, and vice versa, particularly in times of local risings. It is possible that the wild population of the Caspian provinces expanded westwards along the road Zanjān-Takht-i Sulaymān.

The indications that the fire-temple of Thebarmais-al-Shīz was founded by the Sasanian Ardashīr are very uncertain. The evidence of Georgius Pisides about the stronghold *Δαπρασις* founded by the Sasanian *Ardashīr carries no weight, for possibly he wrote his panegyric in the moment of exultation after the arrival of the first reports of Heraclius's exploits,⁴ when the exotic name of the fire-temple could not be properly ascertained. The name of the founder *Ἀπρασιήρ* seems to be a secondary derivation from **Δαρ-Απρασις*, for Georgius commits a gross error about the date of Ardashīr (*vide infra*). It is true that Mis'ar's chronology, according to which the fire had been in existence for 700 years, is a pointer to the early part of the third century A.D., i.e. to the time of Ardashīr, but his hint is too vague. He says nothing about the removal of the fire from Ganzak to Shīz. Nor is it clear what he means by

¹ All the quotations in Marquart, *Catalogue*, pp. 108-9; but H. W. Bailey, *Zoroastrian problems*, 230, suggests the reading **Ganj-i šasapikān*.

² *Nat. hist.*, vi, 43. In another place he speaks, vi, 42, of the capital of Atropatene: "oppidum ejus Gazae (var. Gaze, Gazzea), ab Artaxatis CCCL passuum, totidem ab Ecbatanis Medorum, quorum pars sunt Atropateni," ed. Detlefsen, 1904, p. 136. This indication suits Leylān but not Takht-i Sulaymān.

³ At the most one might recognize *šīz* in the last element of *Dar-arta-sis*, but such a hypothesis does not solve the difficulty in the beginning of the name.

⁴ As suggested by the editor Quercius, ed. Migne, p. 1329.

the "existence" of the fire during seven centuries. It would be unexpected if, in the fourth century of the Hijra when Mis'ar visited al-Shīz, the fire were still burning.

Both Mas'ūdī, iv, 74, and I. Faqīh, 246, have the important report on the removal of the fire Ādhar-Gushnāsp to a new place. Mas'ūdī's passage was quoted above, p. 249. I. Faqīh's version is as follows: " *Ādhar-gushnāsp is the fire of Kay-Khusrau; it was in Ādharbayjān, but Anūshirvān transferred it to al-Shīz." The two reports are identical; but Mas'ūdī usually considers *al-Shīz (wa) *Vālarān* as a hendiadys covering one geographical region (*bilād*). He ought to have said that the fire was taken from *Vālarān to the pond of al-Shīz. The strange terminology of I. Faqīh is to be explained by the ambiguous position of Takht-i Sulaymān. Even in Mongol times Mustaufī, *Nuzhat al-qulūb*, 87, mentions Leylān (Ganzak) under the tuman of Marāgha (in Azarbayjān), whereas (p. 64) he describes the present day Takht-i Sulaymān under the tuman of *Īja-rud (*sic*—instead of the *Anjarūd* of the printed edition), in Persian 'Irāq.

The testimony of Mas'ūdī and I. Faqīh on the transfer of the fire by Anūshirvān (A.D. 531-579), based on some literary Zoroastrian tradition,¹ finds some indirect confirmation in Georgius Pisides. The latter's reference to Ardashīr as the founder of Darartasis is contradictory, but the date which he assigns to "Ardashīr" ("60 + 16 years ago") is very significant, for 626 — 76 = 550 corresponds to the reign of Anūshirvān. Unconsciously Georgius may have quoted the date of the transfer of the fire to Takht-i Sulaymān.

The name Shīz also occurs in I. Khurdādhbih, 119, where he speaks of it separately from "Janza, the city of (Khusrau) Aparvīz"; he places in it the temple *Ādhar-gushnas to which the Zoroastrian kings after their accession walked on pilgrimage from al-Madā'in (Ctesiphon). Mas'ūdī, too, *Tanbīh*, 95, reproduces this latter detail, with some misunderstanding of the name of the fire *Adhar.khsh* for *Ādhar-jushnas.

Before the destruction of the temple by Heraclius, Khusrau removed from Shīz the treasures, and apparently the fire, but, when the period of troubles was over, the fire may have been reinstated in its old place. During the final disruption of the Sasanian kingdom the family of governors of Azarbayjān temporarily played a considerable rôle in the events; see *Ērānshahr*, 112-13. One of them was Bahman Jādōya, of whom a gloss in Ṭabarī, I/4, 2053c, remarks that he was "a king (*malik*) whom they made king (*mallakūhu*) in al-Shīr". This name, which undoubtedly must be read **al-Shīz*, indicates the traditional importance of the place. For some time after the Arab conquest

¹ Rawlinson, 81, refers to the book "Tebektēgin" from which Mas'ūdī borrowed his information on Persian antiquities. In the printed edition of the *Murūj*, ii, 118, 120, the name is given as *al-S.kīsaran* (according to Christensen, *Les Kayanides*, 143: "the chiefs of the Saka"). In *Tanbīh*, 96, a different (?) book is quoted: *Baykār* (apparently identical with *Murūj*, ii, 44: *al-Bnks*). Marquart, *Streifzüge*, 166, restored it as **Paykār*, "Book of wars." Unfortunately Mas'ūdī's quotations contain nothing on fire-temples.

the Zoroastrians of al-Shīz were left unmolested, for under 'Omar it was stipulated that "the people of al-Shīz should not be hindered in the special custom of dancing (*zafn*) on their festal days nor in observing their practices": Balādhuri, 326. We cannot say whether these customs were connected with the survival of the temple.

The memories of al-Shīz in Arab geographers (I. Khurdādhbih, Mas'ūdi, Mis'ar) have been quoted above. It is curious that the tenth century geographers of the "Balkhī tradition" (Iṣṭakhrī, I. Ḥauqal) do not mention al-Shīz. Yāqūt is definitely puzzled by the whereabouts of the temple. In Mongol times a new name obliterates the memory of al-Shīz. Rawlinson's tentative reading of it was *Satūrīq*, but Le Strange's edition of the *Nuzhat al-qulūb*, 64, gives the variants سفوريق سفوريق ستروق. Still better is the reading preserved in Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Jahn, 350: سقورلوق *Soqurluq. He quotes it as the site of a royal Mongolian palace, in agreement with Mustaufi's statement that a palace was restored there by Abaqa. The traces of this building are still visible at Takht-i Sulaymān.¹ The 'Ālam-ārā, 106, still mentions a governor of "Sujās and S.yūrluq (*Soqurluq)", under Shāh Tahmāsp, and it is likely that the present-day name of the River Sārūq, coming from Takht-i Sulaymān, is but a further simplification of the Turko-Mongolian name become unintelligible.²

The present-day "Takht-i Sulaymān" seems to be quite a modern (post-Safavid) product of popular imagination. Rawlinson's suggestion, p. 68, that it might be connected with the name of the Turcoman governor of Kurdistān Sulaymān-shāh *Iva, is without foundation, for his governorship did not extend so far north: *Nuzhat*, 107.

§ 5. *Phraata-Vera*

Going now back to Antonius's expedition, we have to bear in mind the great changes which had taken place in Azarbayjān during the six or seven centuries separating the year 36 B.C. from the reigns of Anūshirvān and Khusrau Parvīz.

When Antonius led his troops against the Parthians, Atropatene was still under its hereditary ruler Artavazd, a vassal and ally of the great Parthian king Phraates IV. His genealogy seems to go up to Atropates (Strabo, xi, cap. xiii, 1), who proclaimed Atropatene independent in order not to become subject to Alexander. Later Artavazd joined the Romans, and his daughter Iotape was betrothed to Alexander, son of Antonius and Cleopatra. The last of the dynasty was Artavazd's great-grandson Gaius Julius Artavazd, who died in Rome.

This peculiar position of Atropatene may have dictated a special administrative arrangement, and it is not necessary that the capital of Atropatene should

¹ See D. N. Wilber in *Bull. Am. Inst. Pers. Art*, V/2, p. 102.

² Mong. *soqur* "blind, a blind man" + Turk. suffix *-luq*, perhaps meaning "a blind alley" (?).

have lain at the same point as the residence of a provincial governor within the limits of a great empire. At the time of the Arab conquest, the marzubān of Āzarbayjān resided in Ardabil, far from the basin of Lake Urmia. But we do not even know how far the king of Atropatene could control the nomadic people (Cadusii, Amardi, Tapyri, Cyrtii) who lived on the north-eastern edge of his dominions : Strabo, xi, ch. 13, 3.

The geographical background of Antonius's campaign is known only in very general outlines. The original historian of the expedition was Quintus Dellius, who, as a geographer, seems to have been far below the standards of Cnæus Pompeius Theophanes of Mytilene, to whom we owe so many valuable details on the countries conquered by Pompeius.¹

Antonius, with his large army, 100,000 strong, had to travel through the dominions of his ally Artavazd of Armenia. According to Plutarch (d. *circa* A.D. 122), *Vita Antonii*, cap. xxxviii, Antonius left "Armenia" to the left. This indication apparently refers to the *capital* of Armenia Artaxata, which lay on the northern bank of the Araxes. It is not impossible that Antonius's further route is reflected in two passages of Strabo. In xi, ch. 14, 14, he speaks of the Armenian mountains "Ἀβος and Νίβαρος belonging to the Taurus", and of these Abos is near to the road that leads to Ecbatana past the temple of Baris (παρὰ τὸν τῆς Βάριδος νεών).² Although what Strabo means by Abos seems to be the southern spurs of Mt. Ararat, it is possible that the name is still reflected in that of the small district *Avajiq* through which pass the communications between Erzerum and Khoy. In another passage, xi, ch. 14, 2, Strabo explains that after Niphates³ "comes Mt. Abos, whence flow both the Euphrates and the Araxes, the former towards the west, and the latter towards the east, and then Mt. Nibaros, which stretches as far as Media". In fact, in the neighbourhood of Avajiq lie the head-waters both of the Murad-su (eastern Euphrates) and of the Sari-su flowing to the Araxes. As, according to Strabo, xi, cap. xiii, 4, Niphates merges into the Zagros, it is likely that by Nibaros is meant the line of hills stretching south-eastwards along the road Avajiq-Khoy and then along the northern bank of Lake Urmia.

But all these hints are very vague, and Plutarch, without any preliminary explanation, passes on to the siege by Antonius of "the great city of Phraata,⁴ in which were the children and wives of the king of Media". Dio Cassius

¹ In his thesis on Theophanes of Mytilene, Strassburg, 1888, W. Fabricius studies also the fragments of Dellius.

² I leave the problem of the temple of Baris over which so much ink has been spilled; see H. Stephanus, *Thesaurus*, Eng. ed., 1816-18, ii, ccxxii-v: L. C. Valckenaer, *Dissertatio de vocabulo Bapis*. See also Pauly-Wissowa *sub verbo*. J. Schrader's restoration **Maos* (in Armenian: Ararat) for *Bapis* is still very tempting in view of the quotation from Nicolaus Damascenus in Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, i, iv, on the mountain Baris, situated towards Armenia, on which many people took shelter during the Flood.

³ Now Ala-dagh, forming the north-eastern barrier of the Van basin.

⁴ This form is repeated in the compilation called *Parthica* and falsely ascribed to Appian, ed. Schweighäuser (1785), p. 77. The other variants are *Φράατρα*, *Φράότρον*; see Plutarch, VII/1 (Teubner, 1915), p. 113.

(wrote after A.D. 229), ed. Boissevain, 1898, ii, 309, calls the capital Praaspa (τοῖς Πραάσποις τῷ βασιλείῳ αὐτῶν προσπεσών). This invasion must have taken place in the summer, or the early autumn, for, according to Plutarch (ch. 37–8), Antonius, eager to spend the winter with Cleopatra, disregarded the original plan to occupy Media “before the Parthians moved from their winter quarters in the early spring”. He retreated from Phraata some time after the autumnal equinox (23rd September) and before winter came on (ch. 40).

This detail is not without importance for the understanding of the description of Atropatian Media in Strabo, xi, cap. 13, who quotes directly from Delliis, “the friend of Antonius, who wrote an account of Antonius’s expedition against the Parthians on which he accompanied Antonius and was himself a commander”. Unfortunately the decisive passage is corrupt: “their summer capital lies in the plain at Gazaca < and their winter residence > in the strong fort Vera (Οὔερα), which was besieged by Antonius on his expedition against the Parthians.” The words in < > were added by the editor Groskurd, but this only increases the difficulty about the seasons. As we have shown, Ganzak must be looked for near Leylān; but this place, lying in the plain,¹ is one of the hottest spots in summer (Rawlinson). Heraclius was pleased with its winter conditions (February-March). From Plutarch we can infer that the king’s family was caught by the siege of Phraata a considerable time before the autumnal equinox, at a period which we may consider as the conclusion of the summer season. Consequently, one would expect to find in Strabo’s text the *summer* quarters at Phraata, and the *winter* quarters at Ganzak.

It has been also suggested² that the fort Vera might have been only the citadel of Gazaca, and already Rawlinson, p. 123, compared it with *Vara* of *Vararat* and with the name of the official *Βαρισμανᾶς* who fled from Ganzak at the approach of Heraclius. However, *Vararat* cannot be simply equated with **Vara-rōt* (*vide supra*), and the interpretation of *Βαρισμανᾶς* is still doubtful. Iranian scholars have suggested to me such parallels as **varsma-pāna*, “the one watching over defence,” or *varzana-pāna*, “town-warden”; and it is even possible that the Greek form is but a rendering of Persian *marzpan* “lord of the marches”. In Procopius, *Bell. pers.*, i, 13–14, a *Βαρεσμανᾶς* is quoted side by side with a *πιτυάξης*, a dignitary of similar functions.

Neither Plutarch nor Dio Cassius mention Ganzak, but both name the capital *Phraata/Praaspa* as the place besieged by Antonius. This would suggest the following restoration of Strabo, xi, cap. xiii, 3: *Βασιλειον δ’ αὐτῶν θερινὸν μὲν < ἐν τοῖς Φραάτοις, χειμερινὸν δὲ > ἐν πεδίῳ ἰδρυμένον Γάζακα *σὺν³ φρουρίῳ ἐρυμνῷ Οὔερα ὅπερ Ἀντώνιος ἐπολιόρησε.* It was

¹ In which Strabo agrees with Theophylactus, *vide supra*, pp. 245, 254.

² Cf. Fabricius, 227: Gazaca—“die Unterstadt”; Vera, “wie schon der Name andeutet (er soll von pers. *var*-saepes, arx kommen, Kramer) die Burg bezeichnete.”

³ The emendation of *Γάζα καὶ ἐν Γάζακα σὺν* is due to Fabricius.

Marquart in *Ēranšahr* (1901), p. 108, who offered this emendation, only leaving blank the name of the summer residence which I take to be Phraata. The difficulty about this natural correction is that Vera besieged by Antonius is divorced from Plutarch's Phraata. Twenty-eight years later Marquart, *Catalogue*, 109, suggested a new reading: < χειμερωνὸν > μὲν ἐν πεδίῳ ἰδρυμένον Γάζακα, θεριῶν < δὲ ἐν ὄρειῳ κείμενον Φράασπα > σὺν φρουρίῳ ἐρυμνῶ Οὐέρα ὄπερ κτλ. This second restoration eliminates the connection of Vera with Gazaka, but it takes considerable liberties with the text.

On the situation of Phraata we are informed by Ptolemy, vi, 2 (Wilberg, p. 393), who quotes in one line:—

	Long.	Lat.
Ζάζακα (*Gazaka) ¹	83° 40'	39° 30'
Φαράσπα . . .	85° 30'	40° 30'
Φανάσπα . . .	86° 30'	40°
Ἄγανζάνα . . .	89°	39° 30'

Ptolemy is not a very reliable source,² and we have to consider only his general indications without putting much trust in his co-ordinates, which are exaggerated. Expressed in miles they are: Gazaka-Pharaspa—117, 3; thence to Phanaspa—90, 7; thence to Aganzana—204, 4. There is no doubt that his Pharaspa, situated to the north-east of *Gazaka, is identical with Phraata/Praaspa. The final point of the table, Aganzana, is presumably Zanjān (Andreas in Pauly-Wissowa). Phanaspa, not otherwise known, should be looked for at one-third of the distance from Pharaspa to Aganzana (*vide infra*, p. 262, n. 1).

The nearest great centre to the north-east of Leylān (Ganzak) is Marāgha; and despite a considerable discrepancy in the distances (6 farsakhs = *circa* 24 miles uphill, instead of Ptolemy's 117·3 miles!) I venture to suggest the identity of Phraata and Marāgha, especially in view of the old name of the latter preserved in Balādhurī, 330: وكانت المراغة تدعى افراهود, i.e. apparently **Afrāh-rōdh*³ for which Yāqūt, iv, 476, gives افرزهرود. The name is definitely connected with the river (Šāfi, Sofi-chay) on which Marāgha is situated. The natural conditions of Marāgha, protected from the north by Sahand and abounding in water and vegetation, are excellent. So much so, that both the Arabs (seventh to ninth century), and the Mongols (thirteenth century) made it their initial residence. No systematic diggings have been carried out in Marāgha; but its site is of greatest antiquity,⁴ and it would have been quite natural for the ancient Atropatids to have chosen Afrāh-rōdh for their summer

¹ Rawlinson, 120, wrongly compares *Gazaca* not with *Zazaca*, but with *Azaga*, which must have lain in the region of Mākū.

² Rawlinson, *op. cit.*, 121: "from some cause . . . there is a greater tendency to exaggeration in Ptolemy's latitudinal measurements of Western Persia than in those of any of the contiguous countries."

³ Wrongly dotted by the editor *Aqrāh-rūdh*. See Minorsky, *Marāgha in E.I.*, in which the suggestion of Phraata = Marāgha was first made. On a similar name of a Sistan river: Avestan *Fradaθā*, now Farah-rūd, see Marquart, *Wehrot*, 1938, p. 22. Marquart disregards the form Phraata and explains Phraaspa as **frādah-aspa* "fostering horses", *Ēranšahr*, 108; *Catalogue*, 109.

⁴ Cf. Mecquenem in *Annales de Géographie*, 1908, 128-144.

residence. Like them, the earlier il-khans resided in Marāgha, and in winter descended to the plains of Jaghatū, in the neighbourhood of the ancient Ganzak.

Closely connected with Marāgha was the famous fort Rūyīn-diz, which lay at a distance of 3 farsakhs and, in later times, often served as a shelter for women and treasures. I have tentatively identified it with the place called on Russian maps *Yay-shahar* (in Turkish “summer-town”), which lies 16 kms. (*circa* 3 fars.) above Marāgha on the slopes of Sahand. If Vera were to be connected with Phraata (and not with Ganzak), this might be the *φρούριον ἐρμυμόν* which Antonius tried to capture.¹

Strabo closes his difficult passage by mentioning (on the authority of Dellius) the distance between Vera and the Araxes as equal to 2,400 stades or 264·5 English miles (1 stade = 194 yards). If by “Araxes” is meant the nearest crossing of the river (near Julfa), the distance is far too great: in reality it would not exceed 160 miles to Leylān, 170 miles to Marāgha (following the road to the east of Sahand), or even 200 miles to Takht-i Sulaymān. If, however, Strabo, like Pliny) has in view not Julfa but Artaxata, another 90 miles should be added to the above distances, and as a result the eastern route from Marāgha would approximate the requirements of the case (260 miles, instead of 264·5).

Rawlinson, with his excellent knowledge of geography and military affairs, has traced Antonius’s disastrous retreat on the supposition that the march began at Takht-i Sulaymān and followed a road to the east of Mt. Sahand.² On the whole he takes the daily distance covered by Antonius’s army at 10 miles, but, as the Parthians constantly harassed the Romans and engaged them in fourteen battles, nothing definite can be affirmed about the various stages of the march. Below, I sum up Rawlinson’s explanations.

On the 3rd day the Romans reach a flooded valley ;	from Takht-i Sulaymān crossing *Aydoghmiş (southern affluent of the Qaranghu)
on the 7th day : a serious engagement	70 miles from Takht-i Sulaymān, in the hills, to the E. of the Miyāndāb plain (?)
days 8th to 18th : constant attacks ;	along the northern skirts of Sahand into the Mīhrān-rūd valley
19th day : halt ; a spacious plain appears ;	the plain of Tabriz
30 miles to a brackish river	Ajī-chay
march continued to a fresh water	Savalan-chay
days 21st–26th (27th ?)	80 miles from the Savalan to Julfa

¹ Another important ancient site in the same region is the castle known now as Qal’a-Zohāk, on the Qaranghu ; see Monteith, *op. cit.*, 4. It lies some 52 miles east of Marāgha, and tentatively might be identified with Ptolemy’s Phanaṣpa (?). Its distance from Zanjān is *circa* 100 miles. Thus in fact it lies at one-third of the distance Marāgha-Zanjān, and the general direction of the road (south-east) corresponds to Ptolemy’s co-ordinates.

² Plutarch, *cf.* 41 : “Antonius was intending to lead his troops back by the same road, which was through a plain country without trees,” but a Mard guide “advised him in his flight to keep to the mountains on his right”, and took him by a “shorter road” along inhabited villages. The way there may have been *via* Sofyan—west of Tabriz—eastern bank of Lake Urmia, or alternatively, Sofyan-Tabriz and round the north-eastern side of Sahand. The retreat must have been by some shorter cut of the eastern Sahand, and more to the north-east of the former road (i.e. hugging the western hills of Qaraja-dagh which overlook the Tabriz plain).

In view of my different initial point I should make the following alterations in the scheme. As the Romans were travelling with heavy baggage and, especially in the beginning, had to regulate their order of retreat, three days would not have been too much for the passage from Marāgha, or Rūyīn-diz, into the upper valley of Qaranghu, which might be taken for the place flooded by the Parthians. The further line of retreat would be round the eastern slopes of Sahand, from Qaranghu into the Ūjān valley. In the latter I should place the major engagement with the Parthians. The remaining part of the route followed by Antonius would be in conformity with Rawlinson's explanations, the brackish river (Ajī-chay) being the only definite feature in Plutarch's picturesque report. Rawlinson's variant has some advantage of distances in the beginning, but the march round the south-eastern spurs of Sahand and the crossing into the Ūjān valley must have been a difficult task and taken quite considerable time. Consequently, the Marāgha version of the campaign meets with no difficulty.

Generally speaking, we have to allow for many differences between the campaigns of Antonius and of Heraclius. Antonius had lost his baggage-train and had before him a highly mobile and cunning enemy. His story does not seem to expand beyond the dominions of Artavazd of Atropatene, and it would have been very rash on his part to push forward so deep into the foe's territory as Takht-i Sulaymān.¹ On the way to it, there should have been some echo of his passage through Ganzak, whereas to besiege Phraata he may have turned off the main road somewhere near Bināb, before reaching Ganzak, and without tackling the problem of a large city which lay in the plain and was open to the counter-attack of the light Parthian cavalry. By no means should we forget the fact that the expedition of A.D. 591 carried out a detailed reconnaissance of the country which was of great use to Heraclius. Antonius had no such advantage and was moving in *terra incognita*.

Consequently, all the uncertainties weighed, I should stress the important similarity of the names Phraata and Afrāh-rōdh, in order to separate Phraata from Ganzak and Shīz, and to locate it at Marāgha.

§ 6. *Lake Čēčast*

In addition to the difficulties presented by our texts we have to cope with some special complications in the toponymy of Azarbayjān. Under the Sasanians, the ancient Iranian mythology, which has in view chiefly Eastern Iran, was fitted into the background of Azarbayjān. The real geographical names, like Ganzak, belonged to definite places, but legends could be located anywhere and simultaneously at different points. Such is the purely mythical lake Var-i Čēčast (Avestan *Čaēčasta*)² in which Afrāsiyāb (Frañrasyan) tried to escape from Kay Khusrau.

¹ This point of view is not contradicted by a one day's raid and the foraging expeditions which Antonius launched from Phraata (Plutarch, ch. 39-40).

² I doubt Herzfeld's statement about the data of the Kay Khusrau cycle being "wirkliche Geographie", *Arch. Mitt.*, II/2, p. 72.

Firdausī, vii, 140, in his version of the battle fought between Khusrau Parvīz and Bahrām Chūbīn (*vide supra*) says that Khusrau hastened towards Lake *Chēchast (cleverly restored by Rawlinson from the traditional *Khanjast*). As we know, the historical battle took place in the immediate neighbourhood of Lake Urmia, and this settles the problem in this particular case. The details are more confused in the legend of Afrāsiyāb, ed. Mohl, iv, 195–200. This Iranian hero takes refuge in a grotto near Barda' (Partav, in Transcaucasia)¹ and then throws himself into the sea called Āb-i Khanjast (*Chēchast) in the neighbourhood of the fire-temple of Ādhar-gushnasp. Apart from the confusion of *Vālarān (والران) with al-Rān (الران), already discussed on p. 247, it is possible that Barda' (or بردعه) has been mis-read from Marāgha (مرآغه), as precisely the same misunderstanding took place in Miskawayh's report on the Russian raid on Barda'a, see *The Eclipse*, ii, 64. These corrections take us back to Lake Urmia, and even the detail on Afrasiyāb being lassoed from "an island" improves the chances of our restoration (*Marāgha), for there are islands in Lake Urmia.

At first sight, the names Čēčast and al-Shīz seem to be of different origin²; but there are some indications of the possible passage of the former into the latter.³ We can follow the traces of such changes only in Islamic times. The Iranian sound č is rendered in Arabic both by *j* and *š*. According to Ṭabarī, I/2, 616, Afrāsiyāb hid himself in the pool (*ghadīr*) known as بئر جاسف "well of *Jāsif", var. *Bar-jāst*, which Hoffmann, 251, reading the *alif* with *imāla*, restored as **Bar-Čēst*, while he took *bar* for Iranian *var* "a lake, pond". A similar reduction may lurk in the name of the last stage before Marāgha which is greatly disfigured in the manuscripts: I. Kh., 120, سارحاست or خواسب, Qudāma, 212, سواكاست, Muq., اميوالحاسب or اميوالحاست. In the light of Ṭabarī's text, Muqaddasī's form might be restored as *بئر الجاست *bi'r al-Čēst*.⁴ In I. Balkhī's *Fārs-nāma*, 50 and 79, the fire-temple of Azarbayjān is located at Jīs (< *Čēs, Čēč). Yāqūt, iii, 354, regards *Shīz* as the Arabic (?) form of the earlier *Jīs*. These examples indicate the possible links in the evolution of the name, but the passage of Čēč into *Shīz* (**Shēz* ?) points rather to some purely Iranian dialectal differences (Parthian, Kurdish ?).

We have seen that the earliest location of Čēčast is connected with Lake

¹ Nasawī, the biographer of the Khwārazm-shāh Jalāl al-Dīn (p. 225), boldly indicates the exact place of the event in the highlands of Barda'a. [In the *Bundahishm*, xxii, 8, the "lake of Khusrau" is placed at 50 farsakhs from Čēčast. Even reckoning 1 far. = 3 miles, the distance would take us beyond Zanjān. E. W. West identified Khusrau's lake either with that of Van, or with Sevan (Gökche). The latter is preferable, as Van has no connection with Khusrau.]

² Two other *Shīz* (without the article) are known, Schwarz, op. cit., 703, 917, but their names are doubtful: one of them (perhaps **Bīr*) in Shahrzūr, and the other (var. *Sīr*) at 4 fars. north of Dīnavar. *V. supra*, p. 253, n. 3.

³ There was of course a temptation to take Čēčast for Čēč-ast "it is Čēč".

⁴ The restoration of this name with *-khōst*, "a dam, a road rammed down," is unlikely. On *khōst* see Herzfeld, *Arch. Mitt.*, II/2, 80–3.

Urmia, but the modified name **Shēz* was apparently reserved for the site of Takht-i Sulaymān, which, even before the transfer of the fire, may have been alternately identified with the death of Afrāsiyāb (see Mas'ūdī, ii, 131). Ṭabari's expression "the *ghadīr* of **Āst*" undoubtedly refers to some pool, and could not have been applied to such a vast expanse of water as Lake Urmia.

It is even possible that "Afrāsiyāb's pool" was sometimes located at a quite different point in the same region. Should our restoration of Muqaddasi's stage prove right, it would indicate that some place in the neighbourhood of Ganzak/Janza was also connected with the same legend. As Ganzak lay at 6 farsakhs to the south of Marāgha, and **Bi'r Jāst* (Sābur-khāst) at 7 farsakhs in the same direction, we can think for it of some place in the neighbourhood of Miyān-du-āb, where several dams are in existence (on the Tatu, on the Leylān river), to say nothing of the flooded stretches of land.

This brings us to a very curious discrepancy in Yāqūt. Frankly distrustful of Mis'ar, Yāqūt concludes the quotation from the latter's report on al-Shīz with his own remark that "the people of Marāgha and that region call this [*sic*] place Kaznā". In a special short paragraph on Kaznā, iv, 272, Yāqūt locates it at 6 farsakhs from Marāgha (cf. I. Kh. and Qudāma), saying that "therein [*sic*] is the temple of the Magians and the ancient fire-temple and a very high portico (*iwān*)". Further under *Jaznaq*, ii, 72, he repeats practically the same statement. No doubt is possible that Yāqūt is thinking of Ganzak (Leylān).

Mis'ar was the only traveller to visit the remote site of Takht-i Sulaymān and there to see the remains of the temple, which even now are said to be discernible on the spot (D. N. Wilber). But we cannot say whether Yāqūt saw the ruins of Ganzak, although he must have passed quite close to them.¹ His reports seem to confirm the supposition that in the neighbourhood of the ancient town there still survived some recollections of the time when the fire-temple (with all its legendary associations) stood in it.

We have but to repeat that the whole legend of Čēčast is an unhistorical fiction, only artificially connected with the real facts about Ganzak and the fire-temple of Ādhar-Gushnasp.

This brings us to the end of our article, in which, contrary to Sir H. Rawlinson, we have tried to distinguish between Phraata, Ganzak, and the *later* site of the fire-temple at Thebarmais = Shīz = Takht-i Sulaymān. Additionally we have considered the various ways in which the ancient myth of Čēčast was located.

I dedicate this paper to my friend Professor E. H. Minns, F.B.A., who has again put me under obligation by drawing a view of Takht-i Sulaymān.

CAMBRIDGE, 22nd June, 1944.

¹ See Wüstenfeld, *Jācūt's Reisen*, in *ZDMG*, xviii, 1864, p. 441. Yāqūt definitely says that he visited Baswē which lies to the south-west of Lake Urmia, but his road to Marāgha must have left Ganzak considerably to the south-east.

² In the *Bundahishn*, xxii, 8.